

# Commerce Management Strategy: Success and Challenges

## Introduction

Secretary Daley has personally made “effective, efficient management” a critical goal for the Department. Commerce has made significant progress in meeting this goal, and, although challenges remain, the Department is proud of its success in achieving the Secretary’s vision.

## Improving Our Management Effectiveness and Efficiency

When Secretary Daley took office, he immediately began to focus on improving the management of the Department. At the Secretary’s direction, PriceWaterhouse compared Commerce’s management practices with those of well-run public and private organizations and presented the Department with 46 recommendations to improve performance.

This process led to some reorganization and laid the foundation for our “Strategic Management Plan.” This plan was collaboratively developed by the Secretary, the Chief Financial Officer/Assistant Secretary for Administration, Commerce bureaus, and our employees. The Strategic Management Plan focuses on seven elements that cut across the Department:

- I. Supporting a successful Census 2000
- II. Ensuring reliable and accurate Department-wide financial management
- III. Making the most efficient use of information technology investments
- IV. Implementing an integrated policy, planning, and budgeting process
- V. Establishing a solid risk management program
- VI. Improving customer service
- VII. Creating a workplace that celebrates diversity and is free from discrimination

Secretary Daley is using the Department’s 5-year Strategic Plan (submitted in September 1997) and our Strategic Management Plan as vehicles for management oversight, guidance, and tracking. We have been supplementing our efforts to improve management effectiveness through close and continuing dialogue between Departmental leadership and oversight offices, including the Office of the Inspector General (IG), the Office of Management and Budget, and the General Accounting Of-

fice (GAO). These organizations have brought valuable insights to the table, which we have been able to incorporate in our management plans.

This section of the APP outlines the progress we have made in each one of these seven areas and describes how we are addressing the challenges that still remain. We will continue to move aggressively to improve our management capabilities and to ensure that Secretary Daley’s legacy is a well-managed, well-organized, effective Department of Commerce that provides superb service to the American public and business community.

## I. Decennial Census

### 2000 Decennial Census

Our top management priority at Commerce is to ensure that the 2000 Census – which will hire some 300,000 staff and award some \$1 billion in contracts – is managed effectively and efficiently. The Decennial effort — sometimes called the “management Olympics” — is the most complex mobilization our Nation faces short of war. Undertaking a project of this magnitude requires an enormous amount of organization, discipline, and attention to detail.

We are committed to making Census 2000 the most accurate Census ever. To do this, we have taken extensive steps to monitor and manage risks associated with personnel, payroll, real estate, civil rights, procurement, human resources, security, technology, accounting system, and other issues related to design. We have paid close attention to the guidance and criticism that aspects of the Census have received from the IG, the GAO and the U.S. Congress. In addition, the Department’s senior managers (including the Deputy Secretary, Chief Financial Officer, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration (DAS – Admin), the Under Secretary of Economic Affairs and others) have personally conducted numerous regional site visits throughout the country and learned first-hand about the key issues on the front line including real estate, recruiting/hiring, security, data capture, automation problems, and field operations.

The Department’s management approach to the Decennial includes several elements as outlined here:

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- weekly briefings on management and budget issues from the Bureau of the Census
- twice-weekly management update meetings with the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Deputy CFO-ASA
- oversight and monitoring of key contracts, technological decisions, and security issues
- Detailed attention to guidance and items raised by the IG and GAO, leading to their resolution
- Use of outside contractors/experts to check and approve key management decisions
- Use of an Executive Information System (currently being upgraded and improved) to track and monitor progress of the 3000 activities on the Master Activity Schedule
- Reliance on Business Case Analyses, conducted by the Bureau of the Census, to evaluate and resolve complex design and management issues
- Detailed analysis of the dress rehearsal, including particular attention to management items such as recruiting, costs and budget, performance of software and hardware in new information, performance of contracts, office leasing and performance of systems that track and capture cost information

The Bureau of the Census' detailed attention to logistics and management has contributed, in part, to the success of the dress rehearsal to date. The dress rehearsal has been conducted on a dual track (testing both traditional enumeration and supplemental scientific sampling methods) in three sites: Columbia, South Carolina; Sacramento, California; and the Menomonee Indian Reservation in Wisconsin. The dress rehearsal is a good management test because it encompasses the majority of activities involved in carrying out the Decennial, including: opening and staffing offices, administering a census, conducting follow-up, capturing data, counting hard-to-enumerate individuals, undertaking analysis, and evaluating procedures, systems, coverage, and other aspects of performance.

To date, the results of the dress rehearsal are much better than expected. Hiring and recruiting proceeded without problems, the enumeration was completed on time (or ahead of schedule), initial mail response met or exceeded predictions; and the effort came in on budget.

We have issued our analysis of the results and will use the results to assist in validating and finalizing the Census 2000 plan.

The dress rehearsal also pinpointed a number of problems, largely technical, that must be fixed for the Decennial, including difficulties with the payroll scanning equipment and with bar-coding the long form questionnaire. The Bureau of the Census will use this information, as well as ongoing feedback from the field, to correct problems and to target areas that require continued vigilant oversight.

This Annual Performance Plan was developed before the recent Supreme Court ruling and assumes the use of sampling in the 2000 Census. Under that assumption, we are requesting a total Decennial budget of \$2.8 billion, a \$1.78 billion increase over FY 1999, for census implementation and associated audits. The Census Bureau will develop a plan in light of the Supreme Court ruling and estimates of any associated costs. This plan will include the use of statistical methods, as appropriate, to provide the most accurate census data possible.

### **II. Clean Financial Audits**

Clean financial audits ensure against discrepancies in the Department's financial statements, and demonstrate that the Department is accurate and effective in accounting for the tax dollars it spends. This is one of the Secretary's top priorities. The FY 2000 request for this initiative is \$ 2.1 million.

### **Financial Management**

The Inspector General has raised concerns in FY 1997 that: (a) the Department's financial management structure was not effective in establishing financial management systems and controls and (b) CAMS was substantially over its original estimated cost and was continuing to experience unanticipated performance shortfalls and schedule delays.

To reduce expenditures and impose greater control over the CAMS program, the Department narrowed the scope of CAMS to the Core Financial System plus integrated modules for purchase cards, small purchases, and time reporting and labor cost distribution. The Department also curtailed Department-wide implementation while one bureau (Census) implemented the CAMS software as a full-

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scale pilot during fiscal year 1998. Booz-Allen & Hamilton, Inc. subsequently completed an Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) of the pilot, and determined that CAMS was a success. A cost/benefit/risk analysis showed that CAMS could provide comparable, or better, data for the Department than other alternatives. The Department will soon decide on the best path for moving forward with CAMS at other bureaus in the Department.

In addition, the Department has taken steps to improve its overall financial management structure, controls and procedures. The Department prepared Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) that have begun to solve the problems in these areas at both the Department and bureau levels. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer has worked closely with the bureaus to hire bureau Chief Financial Officers (CFOs). The Commerce CFO established a policy to provide 40 hours of relevant training to all financial management personnel. The Department updated its Accounting Handbook for all financial management standards and applicable interpretations issued by the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board, OMB, and Treasury. In addition, the Department has undertaken a variety of actions (such as improving financial management procedures and holding meetings within the Department's financial community to provide a forum to improve communications and set priorities) to improve the timeliness and accuracy of data. The Department's leadership and financial management team are committed to accomplishing Secretary Daley's goal of obtaining a clean opinion for the Department's FY 1999 consolidated financial statements.

For FY 1999, Commerce bureaus received more favorable audit opinions than they did the previous year. The auditors gave a 43 percent decrease in material weaknesses, meaning that the data and/or process do not conform to accounting standards. The next set of results -- for FY 1998 -- will not be known until March of 1999.

### **III. Digital Department / Information Technology**

Modernizing the Department's information technology infrastructure will expand the range of electronic options available to each bureau, establish Department-wide systems, and enable Commerce to process and disseminate information via the most convenient media for its customers. Secretary Daley has set forth his vision for

a "Digital Department", which leads the U.S. government into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The FY 2000 request for this initiative is \$4.0 million.

The challenge of creating a "Digital Department" has many aspects. These include the creation of a fiber optic backbone and unified network architecture for all appropriate Commerce buildings, consolidation of telecommunications infrastructure across bureaus, creation of a smart-card based physical and security access program, and the leveraging of the knowledge-based infrastructure to ensure that all Department documents are electronically published, categorized, and easily accessible.

### **FY 2000 Budget in CD-ROM Format**

This is the first year in which the Department of Commerce has submitted the Secretary's proposed FY 2000 Budget in a CD-ROM version in addition to the usual printed document. This "digital" version of the Secretary's FY 2000 Budget demonstrates the Department of Commerce's commitment to the advancement of the information age and the expanded accessibility for all Commerce stakeholders and the public to key Commerce documents. The Department also incorporated a CD-ROM version of its Annual Performance Plan as part of the submission of the President's Budget to Congress. Also, the FY 2000 Budget and the Annual Performance Plans are linked electronically on the Commerce website.

### **Year 2000 Problem**

The Inspector General raised concerns that: (a) most of the Department's accounting and feeder systems use two-digit year dates that will become inaccurate beyond December 31, 1999 and (b) if the problem is not corrected, there is serious risk that the Department's mission-critical computer applications will cease functioning properly.

To address these issues, the Department assumed responsibility for centrally managing the Year 2000 (Y2K) Program and is providing policy guidance and oversight to the bureaus which, in turn, are responsible for assessment, renovation, testing/validation, and implementation activities. Schedules have been defined for each of these phases.

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As of November 1998, the Department had:

- Determined that 80 percent of its mission critical systems were compliant with Y2K requirements
- Completed 71 percent of necessary renovations (converting applications, replacing databases and utilities and codifying interfaces)
- Completed 60 percent of the testing, verifying, and validating of converted platforms, applications, databases and utilities
- Completed 59 percent of the implementation of converted or replaced platforms, applications, databases, utilities, and interfaces
- Received a "B" rating from Congressman Steve Horn (R-CA) as part of a government-wide study of Y2K problems, and OMB raised the Department's performance to Tier 2 status ("Making satisfactory progress")

The Department continues to aggressively address the Y2K problems and anticipates meeting the Office of Management and Budget deadline for Y2K compliance by March of 1999, with the exception of one system. The Classified Search and Image Retrieval (CSIR) system will be completed by June 30, 1999. A contingency plan is in place for this system.

### **IV. Integrated Policy, Planning and Budget Process**

This Commerce-wide goal is to establish a framework and schedule for linking policy, planning, and budget activities together to assist the Secretary in leading a cohesive set of Department programs.

This strategy includes a performance reporting system at the Deputy Secretary and the CFO/ASA levels. The Deputy Secretary's performance reporting system will use guidance from the Secretary and the Executive Management Team. The CFO/ASA's performance reporting system will include all aspects of GPRA implementation and the planning, management, and budget processes.

### **Government Performance and Results Act**

Under the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), the Department prepared its first Strategic Plan in September of 1997 and its first Annual Performance Plan (APP) in February of 1998. The Department's APP was subjected to considerable review and comment by OMB, GAO, and Congressional staff. The major theme of these comments was that the Department should strengthen its performance measures, develop more credible performance information, and link performance information more clearly to programs, as they are authorized, appropriated, and understood, by the Congress.

Following consultations with OMB and GAO, the Department contracted with Andersen Consulting to assist Commerce in strengthening its overall APP process, and integrating the development of the APP more directly into the Department's budget process. All bureaus participated in an intensive process that enabled us to achieve a breakthrough in the way we identify performance measures. The Department refined and sharpened its forthcoming FY 2000 APP by:

- Reducing strategic goals from 47 to 34 and decreasing the number of performance measures by 63 percent (thereby focusing on the most important activities)
- Increasing outcome-oriented measures from 22 percent to 56 percent, while dropping 165 process measures (thus allowing a more accurate gauge of impact or results, relative to activity)

These and related improvements will provide a more strategic basis for assessing the benefits of the Department's program activities and will make GPRA more relevant to Commerce managers in helping to evaluate and manage programs.

### **V. Risk Management**

The goal of the Department of Commerce in the area of "risk management" is to focus management attention on the most important issues first – that is, to manage big risks first. Our philosophy is to avoid having "dollars



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chasing dimes” during our risk management review process. Not only is it our goal to intervene in the high-risk areas first, but we also want to make the process by which we conduct our risk management add value to the bureaus involved. We also have engaged in a risk management process that supplies a key ingredient of accountability to proactively implement the Secretary’s management agenda, rather than merely reacting to problems identified by the IG. Commerce management has developed the capability and capacity to carry out this function in two ways:

- By building on the problem solving and analytical skills of existing career personnel within the Department
- By partnering with the private sector to provide the Department technical skills in the areas of information technology and security

### NOAA Satellite Programs

The Department took steps to address IG, OMB, and GAO concerns with the financial management of NOAA satellite programs. As a result, forward funding requirements have been reduced and NOAA now provides regular financial reports which ensure greater accountability in the use of resources, by providing timely identification of surpluses, deficits, and other variations from planned spending.

### Procurement Management

The Inspector General raised concerns in FY 1997 concerning the Department’s acquisition management functions. The Inspector General cited the Department for a number of significant procurement abuses, for failing to provide strong, central procurement leadership, and lack of effective oversight of information technology issues.

In response, the Department’s senior managers have increased attention to acquisition management, changed key personnel, and developed a commonly shared vision of the importance of integrity and teamwork among acquisition management professionals. The need for effective risk management of the Department’s procurement activities was included among the recently developed strategic initiatives of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer

(CFO). The CFO, Deputy CFO-ASA, and their staff implemented new operational and policy changes which link these changes to individual performance plans and which support newly-broadened working relationships among all pertinent Department offices, bureau offices, and program customers. These changes have been contributing to significant decreases in the time needed to complete complex procurements. At the same time, the Department reversed recent practices that had limited its oversight of bureau acquisition management. These actions have contributed to the Department’s procurement community receiving three of the Vice President’s Hammer Awards and to the Inspector General *dropping* procurement as a management concern.

In addition, Commerce has embarked on an ambitious and innovative program to increase the amount of contract dollars awarded to minority firms. The Deputy Secretary, Deputy CFO-ASA, and the procurement team are using goal-setting, the OSDDBU outreach process, and organizational reform to increase the number of minority firm bidders and opportunities.

### Administrative Service Centers (ASCs)

The Department conducted a comprehensive review of our ASCs nationwide. The Centers are comprised of over 450 FTEs and over \$26 million of direct costs, and provide administrative services to all Department field employees. The study involved work teams led by the ASC directors; involved every field employee through a customer satisfaction survey; and was based on extensive communication with ASC frontline employees. The Department took the recommendations, which were developed during the study, into a GE-style workout and addressed them in a 1-day period. These recommendations covered six management areas:

- Customer Satisfaction
- Automation
- Organizational Alignment
- Financial Performance
- Human Resources Improvement
- Departmental Policy

The Department is currently monitoring the implementation of these recommendations.

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### NOAA Fleet

The Inspector General raised concerns in FY 1997 that: (a) most of NOAA's planned fleet investment and expenditures are wasteful and should not be made, (b) NOAA can obtain better data collection and ship services at lower cost if it acquires these services from the private sector, and (c) outsourcing would give NOAA program managers greater access to the latest technologies and more cost-effective platforms.

The Department has taken an active role in overseeing NOAA's efforts to develop alternatives to maintaining the NOAA fleet. In FY 1998, NOAA outsourced 1,771 of its Days at Sea (DAS)— 35 percent of its total DAS. In addition, NOAA plans to outsource 1,803 DAS in FY 1999. NOAA established a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with university vessel operators. The MOA calls for the joint scheduling of NOAA and university oceanographic research ships. This permits greater access to both NOAA and university scientists to the most cost-efficient vessels available. Over the past few years, NOAA has decommissioned one-half of its hydrographic fleet and is contracting with the private sector for much of its hydrographic data requirements. If funding is available, NOAA expects to contract out at least 50 percent of its hydrographic survey needs beginning in FY 1999.

NOAA has forecast the following data acquisition needs through 2008 to meet current mission requirements for its fisheries programs:

- NOAA will require capacity for 6,005 DAS to carry out its fisheries and marine mammal assessment surveys
- Replacement vessel capacity of 1,080 to 1,620 DAS will be needed as NOAA's current fisheries research vessels reach the end of their useful lives
- At least 3,489 DAS — 58 percent of the total — can be met by charters and University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System (UNOLS) ships
- 700 DAS — 12 percent of the total — can be met through cooperative state and foreign programs

In addition, the oceanographic and coastal monitoring mission areas will continue to outsource to meet requirements. These projections reflect approximately 50 percent outsourcing.

NOAA indicates that — depending on cost efficiencies and program requirements — the replacement capacity may or may not be met through vessels owned and operated by NOAA. In FY 2000, NOAA is requesting funds for the construction of one new acoustically quiet fisheries research vessel.

### Facilities Management

The Inspector General raised concerns about the need for stronger Department oversight of long-term facilities planning among the bureaus, including the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST's) Capital Improvement Facilities Program, the consolidation of Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) headquarters offices, and the nationwide acquisition of office space needed to support the 2000 Decennial Census.

The Department improved its oversight of the Capital Improvements Facilities Program (CIFP) and has taken a more active role in reviewing CIFP budget requests. The Department and NIST used Booz-Allen & Hamilton, Inc. (BAH) to review NIST's plan for upgrading its laboratory facilities. The contractor found that *without intervention, the performance deterioration caused by facilities inadequacies will seriously impede, if not invalidate, NIST's ability to maintain standards in weights and measures*. The Department and NIST worked on formulating budget requests that would provide adequate facilities in a cost-efficient manner. In February of 1998, the Department and NIST submitted a Facilities Improvement Plan to Congress, as part of the President's FY 1999 budget. In FY 2000, we plan to construct the Advanced Measurement Laboratory and to increase funding for safety, capacity, maintenance, and major repairs in order to reach a base level of \$60 million in fifteen years (as recommended by BAH).

Over the past several years, the PTO developed plans for consolidating its headquarters offices from space in 17 buildings (with 32 leases) to a single campus with one lease in eight (or less) buildings. The consolidation efforts have been directed at meeting space expansion needs with reasonable proximity to Metrorail (a Congressional requirement), through competition (to help ensure

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the best value), and on one campus (to support operating efficiencies). In May of 1998, Secretary Daley provided Congress with an independent assessment of the PTO space acquisition project. The findings supported the PTO's space requirements. A lease is scheduled to be awarded in December of 1998, with the expectation of consolidation leading to savings \$72 million over the twenty-year lease.

Every ten years, the Bureau of the Census faces a major challenge in acquiring acceptable, short-term office space across the Nation to support the Decennial Census. Census plans call for acquiring: (a) 130 early opening local Census offices, (b) 401 Census rural field offices, and (c) more than 350 other offices. To help meet these demands for space, the Bureau of the Census initiated an innovative partnership with the General Services Administration (GSA) to arrange for the availability of suitable space for the first two categories. This partnership agreement specifically defines respective GSA and Bureau of the Census roles and responsibilities, the leasing process, and special Bureau of the Census requirements.

As of mid-September of 1998, the GSA had arranged for leases of 98 percent of the early opening local Census offices and 100 percent of the Census rural field offices. After assessing GSA's performance on obtaining these leases, the Bureau of the Census will determine whether to ask GSA to acquire the remaining Census offices or to conduct its own effort.

The Department has taken an active role in overseeing all preparations for the Decennial Census, including the leasing project. A Departmental realty specialist works on-site at Census headquarters three-to-four days a week monitoring space tracking systems, attending meetings, and providing whatever Departmental assistance is needed. The Department's efforts will continue through the duration of the Decennial.

### Field Office Streamlining

The Department of Commerce, through its field office structure, has a significant presence outside the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, including a field office presence in all 50 states and in some U.S. territories and foreign countries. Approximately 43 percent of the Department's employees, or about 14,500 personnel, are located in domestic field offices. It is through this network of field offices that many of our Department programs and services are delivered.

As part of the overall effort to improve Departmental management of programs and the delivery of services to customers, the Deputy Secretary requested selected bureaus to submit field office streamlining implementation plans. Those selected bureaus, including BXA, EDA, ITA, MBDA, and NOAA, were directed to review their current field office structure and assess the potential for streamlining and improving service delivery through consolidation, collection, cross-servicing, or other alternative configurations. Upon completion of the proposed Weather Service modernization program, and the restructuring of the MBDA field offices at the end of FY 1999, the number of domestic field offices will be reduced from a base of 849 to 639 — a reduction of 25 percent.

### National Weather Service Modernization

The Inspector General raised concerns that the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) was experiencing serious difficulties — continual cost growth, schedule delays, management instability, and sluggish technical progress.

To address these and other concerns, the Department completed a detailed evaluation of the National Weather Service (NWS) budget and operations. General Kelly, a former director of the U.S. Air Force Weather Service with more than 30 years experience, conducted this review.

Based on the review, Secretary Daley directed the NWS to implement reforms to improve services and reduce costs, including the creation of a new position for a Chief Financial Officer to improve financial management, refine projected schedules, and clarify program management responsibilities. Subsequently, Secretary Daley was able to certify to Congress that the Department and NOAA would be able to complete modernization with the deployment of 154 AWIPS systems nationwide within the \$550 million Congressionally imposed cap.

Modernization remains on schedule, with both development and deployment planned for completion by June 30, 1999. Currently 56 AWIPS systems are installed and an additional six systems are scheduled for deployment by September 30, 1999 for a total of 62.

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### Security

As a result of weaknesses in the Department's security program, the Department conducted an internal review of its security clearance procedures. The resulting document, known as the Reinsch report, included 35 recommendations, such as developing an automated system to track classified documents; conducting physical inventories of classified materials in 1200+ classified storage containers nationwide; conducting zero-based clearance reviews of all full-time and part-time positions that currently require a clearance; and conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of security operations.

Following delivery of the Reinsch report, Secretary Daley commissioned an external review, led by the Security Policy Board (SPB), of the Department's overall security program. The SPB initiated an assessment of the security program of the entire Department, including all operating units that perform any security functions. The SPB team's report recommended: dedicating a higher-level manager with undivided attention to the security program, centralizing control of all security functions in the Department, and improving operational deficiencies in each of eight programmatic areas.

Secretary Daley has acted on each of these recommendations. First, he created a new career management position, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Security, and hired an impressive individual to fill this job. Second, the Department has consolidated all security personnel under Office of Security supervision.

Third, operational control of personnel took effect on September 1. Administration and budget transfers, which have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget, will become effective on October 1, 1998. The Department reduced the number of security clearances from 5,415 in November of 1997 to approximately 3,260 — a 40 percent decrease, and further reductions will be made. Under new procedures, security clearances are being granted only on a strict "need-to-know" basis.

Under the direction of the new DAS-Security, the Department is moving rapidly and aggressively to complete physical inventories of classified materials, to inventory and bar-code equipment, and to complete the recommendations in the Reinsch Report and the SPRB.

### VI. Customer Focus

The Commerce management strategy aims at improving customer service throughout the Department by engaging our clients, stakeholders, and employees in developing, delivering and evaluating first-rate, world-class services. This customer focus will renew the Department's and each bureau's efforts to improve customer service in a demonstrable and measurable way.

#### The Advanced Technology Program (ATP)

The Inspector General recommended that the program: (a) provide for the availability of funds through the life of projects and (b) ensure that grantee's accounting practices are consistent with federal-cost reimbursement policies. The Department took steps to resolve these concerns and Secretary Daley made several important operational and policy changes to improve the impact and cost-effectiveness of the ATP, such as encouraging state participation in ATP awards, increasing the cost-share ratio for large (Fortune 500) single applicants, and working with the private sector venture capital community to ensure the ATP does not fund projects which can be supported by private capital.

### NOAA Corps

The National Partnership for Reinventing Government recommended reducing the size of the NOAA Corps to achieve savings of \$35.2 million in expenditures. The Inspector General also recommended undertaking reductions to achieve significant savings and management efficiencies. The Department and NOAA downsized the Corps from 415 in FY 1994 to 299 in FY 1997, achieving an annual savings of \$6 million. Following consultations with Congress, the Department and NOAA announced, in June 1998, plans to restructure the Corps. The intent of this restructuring was to ensure that NOAA's fleet operations are cost efficient, effective, and responsive to its customers and the changing nature of federal, academic, and industry partnerships. The Corps was restructured and is being maintained at a reduced level to support NOAA's fleet and aircraft operations.



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### ***VII. Organizational Structure, Development and Diversity***

A key aspect to maximizing all employees' contributions to the Department's goals and objectives is to enhance their understanding of how those goals and objectives relate to their individual jobs. Commerce's Office of Administration has initiated a pilot Individual Development Plan (IDP) project that helps make that crucial linkage: managers and employees align their career goals and IDP learning activities specifically to objectives in their organization's strategic plan. As each organization's strategic plan is designed to support the overall Department's APP, this pilot has great potential to infuse the organization with a significantly enhanced capacity to support the Department's strategic plan.

One of the Department's core values is a firm commitment to promote true diversity. Our employees know this by both words and actions. Secretary Daley has articulated this value in a policy statement to all Commerce employees and the Department has a range of specific initiatives designed to promote diversity. These include a Post-Secondary Internship Program which serves as a pipeline program for the Department's recruitment initiatives and which draws a significant candidate pool from Minority Serving Institutions (MSI). Additionally, our programs and activities with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and American Indian Tribal Colleges and Universities are designed to enhance the capacities of MSIs to support the mission(s) of the Department, and provide opportunities for faculty exchanges, internships for students and faculty, and the donation of excess scientific and educational equipment to MSIs. Our Hispanic Initiative focuses on the implementation of the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Nine-Point Plan to increase the number of qualified Hispanic candidates for federal positions.

In FY 1999, the Department of Commerce is partnering with the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR) to conduct a comprehensive study of ways to enhance diversity in the Federal government. As part of the overall effort, Commerce and NPR will sponsor a benchmarking study, which is intended to identify best practices being employed in the public and private sectors to achieve workforce diversity. This is a first-of-its-kind joint effort to look for practical, workable solutions to provide equal opportunity and a level playing field for all Americans at Commerce.